

## **Evergreen Visioning Project**

### **Task Force Meeting**

#### **DRAFT Meeting Summary**

**Date:** Wednesday April 20, 2005 7:00 to 9:00 p.m.

**Location:** KR Smith Elementary School 2025 Clarice Drive, San José

**Attendees:** See Sign-in Sheet

#### **The agenda included:**

- Approve Meeting Synopsis February 24, 2005 Task Force Meeting
- Introduction Of Meeting Facilitator
- Review Outcomes of April 19,2005 City of San José Council Meeting
- Review and Discuss Task Force Refinement and Work Plan (including outreach schedule)
- Discuss EIR Approach
- Open Items
- Agenda for May 18<sup>th</sup> Task Force Meeting
- Public Comment

#### **Discussion/Key Issues/Questions:**

The meeting synopsis of the February 24,2005 Task force meeting was accepted as submitted.

The facilitator Eileen Goodwin, Apex Strategies introduced herself to the group and referred the members to a previously emailed biography. There were no questions.

The Task Force discussed the outcomes of the April 19, 2005 San José City Council Meeting. The Task Force started the discussion after a brief overview of the Council meeting by Councilmember Dave Cortese. The Councilmember recapped the various motions and discussion as well as public testimony at the Council meeting. The Councilmember recognized Deputy Planning Director Laurel Prevetti for her excellent presentation at the Council meeting.

The Task Force had the following discussion:

- A member of the Task Force who had attended the Council meeting referred to the Council action as a “political high-jacking” and alerted his fellow Task Force members that the proposed Specific Plan process would limit Evergreen Task Force to no more than twenty members. He further opined that this was not desirable and the issues such as traffic and the Route 101 improvements would still be issues even under a new Task Force format and the community would have less of a voice in the process.
- A Memo was passed out from five members of the Task Force (Yip, Chang, Milioto, Alverado and Zito). The memo outlined three main points of a potential strategy. The points in the action plan are as follows: 1) The Task Force should be united in effort, vision and focus. The Task Force should rally with Councilmember Cortese. The Task Force should use the Councilmember as a strong advocate for the Task Force’s position; 2) a concise statement should be crafted and communicated; and 3) the Task Force should acknowledge criticism to date and strive to improve the process specifically have wider public involvement and outreach. The EVP Task Force should propose inclusion of other interests into the existing process not start a new process.
- There was a Task Force member’s question on Mayor’s memo regarding the adjoining neighborhoods. And an additional statement that the adjoining neighborhoods in (Council District 5) are really one community near Pleasant Hill. The Task Force member recommended that the Task Force really needed to emphasize the input from this impacted neighborhood.
- Another Task Force member articulated that there was a way to go in addressing others’ concerns yet he felt that the emails to the City Council were really few in the larger scheme of things. No process is perfect – need to focus on what has been done right. The member further queried the group as to what could be done in two weeks. The Task Force member stressed that it may not be the right time and that there were many misconceptions regarding the Specific Plan process. Need to communicate that message to the City Council. The member recommended a formal letter to the City Council from the Task Force. The member also recommended individual emails from community members. Need to satisfy the Council’s need for information.
- A Task Force member suggested that since so many speakers had requested wider community involvement that it could be accomplished by widening the existing Task Force group. The member suggested the Task Force draft a counter-proposal to the Mayor’s and include membership on the Task Force from the Mount Pleasant, Story, Capitol, White neighborhoods as well as any other neighborhood potentially impacted by traffic generated from the EVP projects. This suggestion was widely agreed with.

- A Task Force member who attended the City Council meeting expressed his frustration at the two-minute limit for speakers. He also commended the Planning Department (specifically Laurel Prevetti) who has been a great resource throughout the process. The member explained that West Evergreen NAC was impacted because of Arcadia. In addition, he felt the Salvation Army proposal was too big. Community Center is No. 1 priority. He went on to explain he found what happened at the Council meeting to be sad and a shock. He further opined that it was “plain politics.”
- The Property Owners’ representative on the Task Force explained that the property owners have respect for the work of the Task Force. The Property Owners Group would like to see the Task Force continue. He further elaborated that it was not in Property Owners’ interests to start over with the Specific Plan and that the Property Owners Group were not “behind” the Mayor’s memo.
- A Task Force member expressed surprise by what happened at the Council meeting. He felt it was hard to catch up. He elaborated on the points of the Mayor’s memo specifically regarding traffic. The Task Force member expressed a belief that the answer to the traffic issue would be found in the EIR. The Task Force member saw legitimacy of concern regarding integration with Coyote Valley Specific Plan project. He also expressed surprise that the industrial conversion was an issue now since it had been talked about so often and for so long. He queried whether there was a City-wide development plan?
- Several members of the Task Force went on to discuss tactics for communicating with the City Council members and it was suggested that Task Force members meet with Council members. It was stressed that the Task Force members need to really go out there and deliver the message for consideration. Communicate. Communicate. Communicate.
- A Task Force member remarked that he was surprised by Council claiming they were in the dark about the process and also commended Laurel Prevetti for her work at the Council meeting.
- Councilmember Cortese advised the Task Force to separate politics and persuasive arguments. More outreach; then better reporting. But he cautioned that the group could still lose the political battle. That said, he stressed a need to communicate with external public and what the threat is to the process. Dilution of the District 8 community’s input on the new Task Force is a serious issue. This Task Force has a solution and something to advocate for. The Councilmember stressed that the community no longer had the time or process luxury anymore. The Councilmember expressed a willingness to endorse what has been done by the Task Force to-date. The Councilmember stressed that the message and work product from the Task Force needs to be in a format that people can absorb.

- The Task Force agreed to prepare a concise statement within the next two weeks and distribute the statement through all channels (email, meetings, etc.). The Task Force recommended that the story of how we got here be included in the message development. The Task Force debated whether it made sense to reconvene with a roundtable or move forward with product from February 24. There was a desire expressed for a more complete package of information.
- A Task Force member cautioned that the group would need to come to grips with future criticisms.
- Councilmember Cortese advised the Task Force and the interested public to start an email campaign to Council members to let them know that the community members don't agree with changing the process. Use the telephone. Phone calls were acknowledged by the Councilmember as the most effective outreach to Councilmembers along with packed City Council Chambers.
- Property Owners were advised they should be ready to sign up to this group effort as well. There will always be people who aren't happy. Need to look at the whole package. The Task Force noted that they did agree to something that would cause pain for the neighborhood groups. The Task Force members urged each other to get a meeting going to craft a position paper.
- Several Task Force members expressed a comfort and willingness to collect signatures.
- A Task Force member expressed concern that there was a larger issue here, specifically that the Council was anti-self determination for community groups.
- A Task Force member expressed concern that if the Council adopted the Specific Plan and the District 8 Councilmember doesn't participate that there would be ramifications to the neighborhoods.
- It was noted that Planning Staff participation and staff support for this Task Force would be a challenge if the new Task Force was formed by the City Council.
- The Property Owners Group want this process to continue.
- The Property Owner representative on the Task Force and the other Task Force members discussed what resources the Property Owner Group was willing to bring to bear to keep Council members staying the course.
- The Councilmember's office was requested to send out names and phone numbers of the individual City Councilmembers to the Task Force as soon as possible so that the Task Force members could make their calls.

#### Public Comment:

- 1) Lack of community involvement is the main issue. Never gotten answer to questions. Wants a home meeting, presentation at the West Evergreen NAC meeting, etc. The West Evergreen NAC wants to work with the Task Force 2) Wants access to traffic report. 3) EIR will be problematic if no coordination occurs beforehand. Need handout and Spanish translation for NAC meetings.
- A Community member asked why the Mayor and Councilmember Campos didn't attend the Task Force meeting if they wanted to be more involved with the project. It was obvious to the speaker that they aren't truly interested in the issue. The speaker also remarked that he was disappointed with neighbors who spoke at the Council meeting in a negative way about the process because that testimony hurts the whole cause and was shooting at the wrong target.
- *Evergreen Times* representative expressed frustration with the private nature of the caucus group. The representative testified that *The Evergreen Times* should be used to communicate issues to the neighborhood since it has higher circulation in Evergreen than the *San José Mercury News*. It was announced that the circulation of the *Evergreen Times* is 30,000 and the paper is available free.
- Webmaster for the Pleasant Hills Neighborhood Association website ([www.pleasanthillsna.com](http://www.pleasanthillsna.com)) would love to help communicate information. The webmaster further commented that she remembered a similar development plan for the Golf Course property in 1984 where it was contemplated to convert the golf course to condos. Councilmember Pat Saucedo advised that bodies at the City Council were effective to communicate with Councilmembers her advise had been to show up to the Council meetings in person.
- Another speaker reiterated that West Evergreen NAC SNI not getting information and reiterated a need for the traffic report.
- It was suggested that perhaps an Advisory Committee could be formed to address issues back to the full Task Force.

#### Task Force Comment:

- It was agreed that the finished document for presentation to the City Council should be consistent with framework. A meeting was scheduled for 12:30 Saturday April 23, 2005 at Sherry's to draft the document. The Task Force asked that those who draft the document email out the draft before Monday to the full group for review. The goal was to get the document in good enough shape to present it Monday to the West Evergreen NAC for review and discussion.

- After discussion regarding the property owners concerns about supporting 4,200 number the Task Force gave direction to the drafting group that a range of numbers consistent with the February 24 Task Force meeting and subsequent Councilmember memo be presented as the current Task Force position.

It was determined that the next Task Force meeting on May 18<sup>th</sup> cover the agenda items regarding the Task Force Work Plan and the EIR Approach that were not covered at this Task Force meeting as well as a debrief of the May 3<sup>rd</sup> City Council Meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:10 p.m.

**Action items:**

- The Councilmember's office was requested to send out names and phone numbers of the individual City Councilmembers to the Task Force.
- It was agreed that the finished document for presentation to the City Council should be consistent with framework. A meeting will be held at 12:30 Saturday at Sherry's to draft the document. The Task Force asked that those who draft the document email out the draft before Monday to the full group for review.
- The document was to be presented on Monday April 25, 2005 to the West Evergreen NAC for review and discussion.
- After discussion regarding the Property Owners' concerns about supporting 4,200 number the Task Force gave direction to the drafting group that a range of numbers consistent with the February 24 Task Force meeting and subsequent Councilmember memo be presented as the current Task Force position.
- Task Force member Jim Zito agreed to provide traffic information to West Evergreen NAC and attend the NAC meeting Monday April 25.
- A community member representing the West Evergreen NAC requested several follow up information items and meeting. Council Office staff agreed to schedule the meetings and follow-up off-line.

Prepared By: Eileen Goodwin

Distribution: Attendees